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unearned increment correctly conceived, it is certainly true that ability has a part in determining who gets it, but the adjective unearned may, nevertheless, have meaning and force. The impersonal factor in the situation, moreover, will still require notice. The *amount* of unearned increment, e.g., has been at a maximum in the last fifty years, and in the United States, hence the many American fortunes made in "real estate."

In chapter 6 the position is taken that the fact that the individual's ability largely determines the magnitude of his gains is not a sufficient justification for them. That regulative policies may come to be considered necessary is also recognized, and that the grounds will not be merely economic is affirmed.

G. P. WATKINS.

New York City.

Social England in the Fifteenth Century: A Study of the Effects of Economic Conditions. By A. ABRAM. Doctorate Thesis in the University of London. (London: The Research Library, G. Routledge and Sons, 1909. Pp. 238. Price \$1. net.)

Little enough is known about fifteenth century England, and we eagerly seize upon this latest volume dealing with its history. Truly it is a big subject for so small a book, and yet the work is something more than a mere outline. The author analyzes briefly the economic forces of the century, dealing at length with their effect upon society. The central theme is that the development of commerce and the commercial spirit was the dominant factor in the century. To this was due the development of the middle class—the central fact of the period. The love of gain characterized both layman and ecclesiastic, and left its trace upon family life and moral character. Materialism was so much the controlling force that the artistic and intellectual awakening of Southern Europe took no hold upon England.

These facts are given needed emphasis, but the book is uncritical, and far from stimulating. Questions that have troubled the student for years are passed over with the greatest complacency and faith in traditional guesses. The author has made considerable use of unpublished materials in the Public Record Office and in the

British Museum, and consequently has given us many new details. These are used, however, to illustrate the views of others, from which the author rarely finds it necessary to deviate.

The chapter on Commercial Changes follows the usual course, in dealing solely with foreign trade. Although the widening of the market area within England, with all that meant to industry and agriculture, may well be regarded as of the first importance, yet internal trade is here passed over almost as if non-existent. The treatment of agrarian changes is perhaps the weakest part of the book. The author raises our expectations when he brings together some new statistical data regarding the exportation of corn, which would naturally throw light upon agricultural conditions, but our hopes are soon cast down when the meagerness of his researches is apparent, and especially when he shows, through a lack of knowledge of the corn laws of the period, inability to interpret his materials.

The book, is on the whole, very readable and useful to the student as a summary of the results of the labors of others, and as a directory to the sources for the period, though there are some surprising bibliographical gaps. As a scientific treatise, it is marred by an insufficient index. An appendix of fifteen pages of documents, chiefly from manuscript sources, adds somewhat to the value of the work.

N. S. B. GRAS.

Cambridge, Mass.

Small Estate Management. By ALBERT C. FREEMAN. (London: Rebman and Company, Ltd. Pp. xxiv, 119. 2s. 6d. net.)

At this time, when the problem of feeding the people of this and other modern countries is receiving such special attention, when the cry heard in all parts of this country is "back to the land," and when the movement in the British Islands is towards small estates, a book like Mr. Freeman's deserves notice.

The strongest reason given for the movement back to the land in England is not sentiment, health, or a desire to establish a sturdy yeoman class rather than a class of large holders, but the fact that "millions of imports of agricultural produce [are brought]